



EAPF Feedback on draft Delegated Regulation on Educational Measures and Approval of Aid Applicants – EU School Scheme

Brussels, 20 November 2021

The European Alliance for Plant-based Foods (EAPF) and its members welcome the opportunity to provide feedback on the draft Delegated Regulation on educational measures and approval of aid applicants in the context of the EU milk, vegetables and fruit scheme (“EU School Scheme”).

Schools are powerful agents of change, moulding and spreading common knowledge among the young generations. The EU School Scheme has therefore a key role to play in advancing the goals set forth in the Farm to Fork Strategy and Europe’s Beating Cancer Plan. One of the main principles highlighted in the Strategies is the need to move towards more plant-based diets, given their environmental and health benefits. This is why EAPF deems it crucial that **plant-based foods (e.g. fortified plant-based drinks) become part of the eligible products within the EU School Scheme.**

When it comes to educational measures, this can translate into **information on:**

- **The health and nutritional benefits of plant-based foods.** Good nutrition (appropriate intake of vitamins, minerals, and essential nutrients) is crucial for children’s good physical and mental development. It is thus essential to secure access to diverse sources of macro- and micronutrients. Plant-based foods help diversify diets and can be rich in mono- and polyunsaturated fats and fibre, thus contributing to preventing different forms of cancer¹. Fortified with the right vitamins and/or minerals, plant-based drinks are as nutritious as dairy, and are valuable options for children suffering from lactose intolerance or health conditions whereby dairy consumption is unsuitable, allowing for a much more inclusive school environment. It is thus important that children are educated to a broad spectrum of food products that can provide similar or better nutritional values, based on sound scientific evidence.
- **The environmental benefits of plant-based foods.** Over 60% of the EU’s greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in agriculture is attributed to livestock farming, which would

¹ O’Keef. S.J. et al. Fat, fibre and cancer risk in African Americans and rural Africans. Nature Communications. 2015.



represent 78% of agriculture's negative impact on biodiversity, according to the European Court of Auditors². Shifting towards more diets rich in plant-based foods³ – including plant-based analogues to meat and dairy – is fundamental to rebalance the global emissions of the agricultural sector, and provides the chance for people to substantially cut their environmental footprint. Educating children to more sustainable food choices is crucial to grow future generations aware of their impact on the environment and climate.

Aligning the School Scheme with the sustainability and health goals of the EU also means implementing an **inclusive policymaking process**, that allows an equal involvement of stakeholder groups that could contribute to future-proof EU policies. EAPF and its members look forward to working alongside EU policymakers and other food organisations to ensure the School Scheme is fit to deliver on the sustainability and health ambitions of the EU.

The European Alliance for Plant-Based Foods (EAPF) brings together like-minded organisations in the plant-based value chain around a unique mission: To put plant-based foods at the heart of the transition towards more sustainable and healthy food systems. The Alliance represents companies and organisations supporting and promoting plant-based foods.

² European Court of Auditors, Biodiversity in Farming, Audit Preview, May 2019.

³ ["Food System Impacts on Biodiversity Loss: Three levers for food system transformation in support of nature"](#), Chatham House, 3 February 2021; "Food in the Anthropocene: the EAT-Lancet Commission on healthy diets from sustainable food systems", The Lancet, January 2019, 1-147.